LIVING IN TOUGH TIMES

2008 Water Quality Report — Columbia County Water Utility

This report includes information collected from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008

Water Report

Living in tough times brings out the best in all of us, and Columbia County Water Utility strives to demonstrate excellence in all facets of our opertion. During this time of drought, we have worked hard to participate in conservation measures while at the same time providing sufficient amounts of quality drinking water to our customers. We are proud to announce that in 2008, not only were we able to meet the needs of our growing community, but we were also successful in producing quality water that met or exceeded all Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) standards.

In this report you will find information on health facts, term definitions, and numerical values found in your drinking water. Please feel free to contact us with any question you may have using the phone numbers provided on the back of this pamphlet.

Water Sources

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Source Water Assessment

Columbia County Water Utility completed a Source Water Assessment study in April 2002. This assessment identifies potential pollutant sources that could contaminate the water supply. In the ranking of High, Medium, and Low for potential pollutants, our water supply was ranked **Low** at both the Jim Blanchard Sr. Water Treatment Plant and the Clarks Hill Water Treatment Plant. This assessment is available to the public. If you would like to review or purchase a copy, please call (706) 863-6928 during normal business hours.

Lead in Drinking Water

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Columbia County Water Utility is responsible for providing high quality drinking water but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Health Facts

For health reasons, the EPA has prescribed regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791). Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Contaminants that may be present in source water include the following:

- ❑ Microbial contaminants (e.g., viruses and bacteria) that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wild-life;
- ❑ Inorganic contaminants (e.g., salts and metals) which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm run-off, industrial or domestic waste discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming;
- ❑ Pesticides and herbicides which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater run-off, and residential uses;
- ❑ Organic chemical contaminants including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater run-off, and septic systems; and
- ❑ Radioactive contaminants which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Our Drinking Water Sources

Columbia County currently withdraws up to 31,000,000 gallons a day of surface water from the Savannah River to the Jim Blanchard Sr. Water Treatment Facility on Point Comfort Road. An additional 8,000,000 gallons of surface water could be withdrawn from the Clarks Hill Reservoir and treated at the Clarks Hill Water Treatment Facility on Highway 221. With its new expansion, the Jim Blanchard Sr. Treatment Plant will soon be able to withdraw up to 45 million gallons per day. This addition will give the County the ability to withdraw and treat a total of 53,000,000 gallons a day of potable water.

Columbia County Water Utility Quality Data for 2008

Regulated Inorganic Substances Detected in Treated Water Entering Distribution System

Substance (Units)	Maximum Level Allowed (MCL)	Maximum Level Goal (MCLG)	Average Detected in CCWU	Range Detected in CCWU	Sample Date	Did CCWU Meet Requirements	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.91	0.76 - 1.10	2008	Yes	Water additive which promotes strong teeth
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	nd	nd	2008	Yes	Runoff from fertilizer use; septic tank leachate
Turbidity (ntu)	TT	n/a	**Maximum** = 0.23	n/a	2008	Yes	Soil runoff and erosion of riverbanks and shoreline.
Turbidity (percent)	TT=percentage of samples < 0.3ntu	n/a	**Percent Below 0.3ntu** 100%	n/a	2008 2008	Yes	Soil runoff and erosion of riverbanks and shoreline.

Regulated Inorganic Substances Detected in Treated Water at Tap

Substance (Units)	Action Level Allowed (AL)	Maximum Level Goal (MCLG)	90th Percentile in CCWU	Number of sites above AL	Previous Sample Date	Did CCWU Meet Requirements	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.18	0	2007	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing systems and/or erosion of
Lead (ppb)	15	0	6.0	0	2007	Yes	natural deposits

Regulated Organic Substances Detected in Treated Water at Tap

Substance (Units)	Max Yearly Average Allowed (MCL)	Maximum Level Goal (MCLG)	Max Quarterly Average Detected in CCWU	Annual Range Detected in CCWU	Sample Date	Did CCWU Meet Requirements	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	n/a	52	23.4 - 77.2	2008	Yes	By-product of drinking water disinfection by chlorination
Total Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	n/a	35	12.7 - 51.6	2008	Yes	

Substance (Units)	Maximum Residual Level Allowed (MRDL)	Maximum Level Goal (MRDLG)	Yearly Average Detected in CCWU	Range Detected in CCWU	Sample Date	Did CCWU Meet Requirements	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	1.2	0.2 - 2.0	2008	Yes	Water additive used to control microbes
Total Organic Carbon (ppm)	TT	n/a	1.4	1.2 - 1.9	2008	Yes	Naturally present in the environment

Regulated Bacteriological Sampling

Substance (Units)	Number of Required Samples Collected Per Month	Maximum Level Allowed (MCL)	Number or Violations	Highest Monthly Percent	Sample Date	Did CCWU Meet Requirements	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Total Coliforms (P/A)	80	5.00%	0	0.00%	2008	Yes	Naturally present in the environment. Disinfected by Chlorination
E-Coli (P/A)	80	0	0	0	2008	Yes	

For Your Information

Substance	Range Detected in CCWU
Sodium	8.3ppm - 12ppm
Alkalinity	12ppm - 20ppm
Hardness	1 - 30ppm (Very Soft)
pH	6.8 - 8.5

Definitions

Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): Maximum disinfectant residual allowed in the distribution system

Not Detected (nd): The amount of a material in a sample was not detected during analytical testing.

Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Parts per Billion (ppb): One part per billion is equivalent to one penny in 10 million dollars.

Parts per Million (ppm): One part per million is equivalent to one penny in ten thousand dollars…... (1 ppm = 1 mg/L)

Please Call

For more information about the CCWU (ID # 0730000), please contact Water Laboratory Manager Rodney Silvey at (706) 868-3460 or Water Treatment Manager John Maldonado at (706)-860-2587. The Public Works Committee meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 8:00 AM at the Evans Government Center Auditorium in Building A on 630 Ronald Reagan Drive.

Rewarding Excellence

Each year, the Georgia Association of Water Professionals gives awards to deserving Water Utilities that go through the year without violating regulations set by the United States EPA and Georgia EPD. Awards presented are the Gold Award, which is given to facilities each year that meet requirements. The Platinum award is given to those facilities which have gone five years or longer without a single violation.

We are are proud to announce to our customers that both the Jim Blanchard Sr. and the Clark Hill Water Treatment Facilities have been awarded the Platinum award for 2008.

Congratulations to the men and women who have worked hard over the past years to earn such an award!